



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**METACOGNITION, STUDY APPROACHES AND READING
ATTITUDE: TOWARDS IMPROVING READING EFFICIENCY IN
ENGLISH**

MOHAMED BIN ABU BAKAR

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By

MOHAMED BIN ABU BAKAR

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,
in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

August 2002



Dedicated to my beloved wife who encouraged me to start on my PhD programme and inspired me to finish it on time. To my children, Filzah and Farhan, thank you for being so tolerant, considerate and understanding throughout my studies

Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of
the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Chairman: Associate Professor Rosli Talif, Ph.D.

Faculty: Modern Languages and Communication

The study investigated aspects of metacognition, study approaches and reading attitude of university students to enhance reading efficiency in English. A total of 503 students enrolled in the proficiency courses at UPM participated in the study. Three hundred and eighty-five students participated in the questionnaire survey and 118 students were involved in the needs analysis. From this population of 503 students, 40 students took part in the quasi-experimental study and out of this sample, ten students were randomly selected for the unstructured interview. It is also important to note that ten lecturers took part in the students' needs analysis.

The results of the needs analysis have shown that factors like metacognition, study approaches and reading attitude are important for reading efficiency. It is noted from the questionnaire survey (metacognition and study approaches) that variables like programme of study, home background, gender and race were not related to reading

efficiency among students. The main factor that revealed a significant difference in reading efficiency was students' SPM English grades. Students with distinctions and credits in English at SPM appeared to have a high level of metacognitive awareness, effective study approaches and a positive reading attitude in English. Besides, the questionnaire survey has shown a strong relationship between study approaches and reading attitude. In like manner, metacognition is guided by students' positive reading attitude.

The results of the quasi-experimental study have shown that average readers at the university level can increase their reading rate by about 27%, and their comprehension score by 22%. A pre and post-test administered for both treatment and control groups have shown a convincing improvement for treatment group students. In fact, all participants of the treatment group gained in their overall score after the eight weeks' (16 hours) of training on reading efficiency.

The interview results revealed that both treatment and control group students faced problems in reading. However, most of the treatment group students have learnt to overcome some of these problems. On the other hand, control group students have said that they did not know how to solve their reading problems. Both treatment and control group students have shown elements of metacognitive awareness. However, what were lacking for the control group students were strategies, both reading and metacognitive strategies.

The study has proposed a reading efficiency model to enhance speed and comprehension in reading. The reading efficiency model proposed in this study with its three major components that is metacognition, study approaches and reading attitude is felt practical and applicable to students. And finally, the findings of this study have established the need for training in reading efficiency for students taking the English proficiency courses at UPM and similarly placed students elsewhere in the country.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**METAKOGNITIF, CARA BELAJAR DAN SIKAP MEMBACA: KE ARAH
MENINGKATKAN BACAAN SECARA EFISIEN DALAM
BAHASA INGGERIS**

Oleh

MOHAMED BIN ABU BAKAR

Ogos 2002

Pengerusi: Profesor Madya Rosli Talif, Ph.D.

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Penyelidikan ini mengkaji aspek metakognitif, cara belajar dan sikap membaca di kalangan pelajar universiti untuk mempertingkatkan bacaan secara efisien dalam bahasa Inggeris. Seramai 503 pelajar yang mengikuti kursus kemahiran dalam bahasa Inggeris telah menyertai kajian ini. Sejumlah 385 pelajar telah melibatkan diri dalam tinjauan soal-selidik dan 118 pelajar telah mengambil bahagian dalam analisis keperluan pelajar. Daripada populasi sejumlah 503 pelajar ini, 40 pelajar telah mengambil bahagian dalam kajian eksperimen kuasi (quasi-experimental study). Sepuluh pelajar dari kajian eksperimen kuasi ini telah dipilih secara rawak untuk mengambil bahagian dalam kaedah temuduga yang tidak berstruktur. Seramai 10 pensyarah telah mengambil bahagian dalam analisis keperluan pelajar.

Hasil kajian keperluan pelajar telah menunjukkan bahawa faktor-faktor metakognitif, cara belajar dan sikap membaca adalah penting bagi meningkatkan bacaan secara efisien. Kajian soal-selidik yang melibatkan metakognitif dan cara belajar telah menunjukkan bahawa pembolehubah seperti program, latarbelakang rumah, jantina dan bangsa tidak mempengaruhi bacaan secara efisien di kalangan pelajar. Faktor utama yang telah menunjukkan perbezaan secara signifikan dalam kajian ini adalah gred bahasa Inggeris SPM. Pelajar-pelajar yang telah memperolehi gred yang cemerlang dan kepujian dalam bahasa Inggeris di peringkat SPM didapati mencapai tahap yang tinggi dalam aspek metakognitif, cara belajar dan sikap membaca dalam bahasa Inggeris. Selain daripada itu, tinjauan soal-selidik telah menunjukkan perkaitan yang kukuh di antara cara belajar dan sikap membaca. Disamping itu aspek metakognitif mempunyai hubungkait dengan sikap membaca yang positif di kalangan pelajar.

Hasil kajian eksperimen telah menunjukkan bahawa pembaca yang sederhana di universiti boleh meningkatkan kadar bacaan sebanyak 27% dan kadar pemahaman sebanyak 22%. Ujian sebelum dan selepas yang telah diberi kepada kedua-dua kumpulan rawatan dan terkawal telah menunjukkan peningkatan yang memuaskan bagi kumpulan rawatan. Kesemua pelajar kumpulan rawatan telah meningkat dalam skor keseluruhan selepas menjalani latihan membaca secara efisien selama lapan minggu (16 jam).

Keputusan temuduga telah menunjukkan bahawa kedua-dua pelajar kumpulan rawatan dan terkawal menghadapi masalah dalam bacaan khususnya memahami perkataan.

Walaupun, pelajar daripada kumpulan rawatan telah mengetahui cara-cara bagi mengatasi sebahagian daripada masalah-masalah ini. Sebaliknya, pelajar dari kumpulan terkawal telah mengatakan bahawa mereka tidak mengetahui bagaimana untuk mengatasi masalah membaca. Kedua-dua kumpulan ini telah menunjukkan elemen kesedaran metakognitif. Tetapi, kekurangan pada kumpulan kawalan adalah strategi, iaitu strategi bacaan dan metakognitif.

Kajian ini telah mencadangkan satu model bagi bacaan yang efisien untuk meningkatkan kelajuan dan pemahaman dalam bacaan bahasa Inggeris. Model bacaan efisien yang dicadangkan dalam kajian ini yang merangkumi ketiga-tiga komponen iaitu metakognitif, cara belajar dan sikap membaca adalah praktik dan bersesuaian untuk semua pelajar. Hasil kajian ini juga telah mencadangkan latihan dalam bacaan efisien untuk pelajar yang mengikuti kursus kefasihan bahasa Inggeris di UPM dan pelajar yang serupa di tempat lain di negara ini.

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I certify that an Examination Committee has met on 14th August 2002 to conduct the final examination of Mohamed bin Abu Bakar on his Doctor of Philosophy thesis entitled “Metacognition, Study Approaches and Reading Attitude: Towards Improving Reading Efficiency in English” in accordance with Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Act 1980 and Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Regulations 1981. The committee recommends that the candidate be awarded the relevant degree. Members of the Examination Committee are as follows:

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations, which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at UPM or other institutions.



MOHAMED BIN ABU BAKAR

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ARC	Anticipation, Realisation and Contemplation.
ASEAN	Association of South- East Asian Nations
ASI	Approaches to Studying Inventory
BM	<i>Bahasa Malaysia</i> (Malay Language)
C1-C20	Control Group (Quasi-Experimental Study)
CR1-CR5	Interview (Control Group)
DA	Deep Approach
EAP	English for Academic Purpose
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
ESP	English for Specific Purposes
HE	Higher Education
IT	Information Technology
K-economy	Knowledge economy
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language (English Language)
PSA	Present Situation Analysis.
RASI	Revised Approaches to Studying Inventory
SA	Surface Approach
SPM	<i>Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia</i> (Malaysian Certificate of Education)
SQ3R	Survey, Question, Read, Recall, Revise
SQ4R	Survey, Question, Read, Record, Recite, Reflect
SSR	Sustained Silent Reading
STR	Strategic Approach
T1-T20	Treatment Group (Quasi-Experimental Study)
TR1-TR5	Interview (Treatment Group)
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UPM	Universiti Putra Malaysia

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

In many parts of the world, an adequate knowledge of the English language is often important for academic studies, professional success, and personal development. This is particularly true of English as so much professional, technical and scientific literature is published in the language today. The most frequently given reasons for the teaching of English in foreign countries, and particularly in developing ones are for economic growth, advanced technology and applied science (Heilman et al. 1998).

It is reasonable, therefore to say that the English language has become an essential language for much social, professional and academic activity in the international milieu. The fact that most developing countries are investing a substantial amount of their resources in the teaching of English shows its position as an important second language (Mohd Faiz, 1998). In the Malaysian context, *Bahasa Malaysia* is the national and official language and it is used as the medium of instruction at all levels of educational institutions. Nevertheless, English is taught as a second language in schools and tertiary-level institutions. The English language enjoys a high position in the Malaysian education system. This is partly due to historical events, as well as recognition of its importance since independence in 1957. It would be reasonable to state that although the status of English in Malaysia has been changed from a medium of instruction to a compulsory subject at all levels of education, the government is